

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

The present amendment cancels claims 16 and 40, amends claim 15, and adds new claims 41 and 42.

Support for the amendment to claim 15 is found in claims 17 and 19.

Support for newly added claims 41 and 42 is found in previously presented claim 40.

It is believed that these amendments have not resulted in the introduction of new matter.

REMARKS

Claims 15, 17-39, 41 and 42 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 16 and 40 have been cancelled, claim 15 has been amended, and new claims 41 and 42 have been added, by the present amendment.

Applicants wish to extend their appreciation to Examiner Vo for the indication on pages 9 and 10 of the Official Action that claims 17-19 contain allowable subject matter. As a result, claim 15 has been amended to incorporate therein the limitations of claims 17 and 19.

The rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of claims: (1) 15, 16, 22-26, 31, 32 and 40 as being obvious over Krejchi (U.S. Patent 6,139,945) in view of Hills (U.S. Patent 6,752,941); (2) 27-29 as being obvious over Krejchi in view of Hills and Burger (U.S. Patent 6,863,972 based on U.S. 2002/0090471); (3) 30 as being obvious over Krejchi in view of Hills and Zehner (U.S. 6,958,185); (4) 20, 21, 25, 26 and 32 as being obvious over Krejchi in view of Hills and Yumiko (JP 2003-184289); (5) 33-36 as being obvious over Krejchi in view of Hills and Hiromitsu (JP 2002-347152); (6) 33 and 37-39 as being obvious over Krejchi in view of Hills and Pollard (U.S. Patent 3,810,337); (7) 15, 22, 23, 27-29, 31 and 40 as being obvious over Burger in view of Hills and Maeda (U.S. 2005/0154094); (8) 30 as being obvious over Burger in view of Hills, Maeda and Zehner; (9) 20, 21, 25, 26 and 32 as being obvious over Burger in view of Hills, Maeda and Yumiko; and (10) 33-36 as being obvious over Burger in view of Hills, Maeda and Hiromitsu, are obviated by amendment with respect to amended claim 15, which incorporates therein the allowable subject matter of claims 17 and 19.

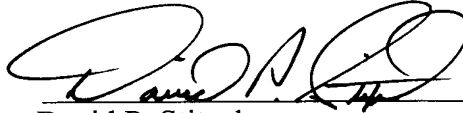
Applicants make no statement with respect to the propriety of the outstanding rejections. However, merely for sake of expedient prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 15 to incorporate therein the limitations of claims 17 and 19, based on the Examiner's recognition that claims 17-19 are free of the cited prior art. Applicants respectfully wish to preserve their right to present original subject matter in a continuation application without prejudice.

Withdrawal of these grounds of rejection is respectfully requested.

In conclusion, Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance and notification to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David P. Stitzel", is written over a horizontal line.

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